

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY Paraguay

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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SUBJECT Labor Situation in Paraguay

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This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 18 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.

1. The Consejo Obrero del Paraguay, COP, (Workers' Council of Paraguay), whose affairs were controlled by an Executive Committee which was Communist dominated, has been suppressed by the Paraguayan government, and its present limited activities are carried on underground. Despite the lack of a decree from the government concerning COP, its headquarters have been raided by the police, and the records of the organization have been seized. The Secretary General of the Executive Committee, Timoteo Ojeda, an avowed Communist, has been jailed since early March 1947, along with Antonio Gamarra, Dimas Acosta, Alfredo Alcorta, and other labor leaders. Because of the arrest of Ojeda, the Communist Party was responsible for appointing "Comrade Gaspar," whose identity is unknown, as acting Secretary General of COP.
2. Only 43 unions are currently registered with the National Department of Labor, whereas, 114 were registered in November 1946. Of the total of 114 registered unions, 62 were affiliated with COP. The drop in the number of registered unions is explained by the fact that many of the unions in the North have been cut off from the capital because of the civil war and by the failure of many unions to supply a satisfactory list of officers. Also a significant contributing factor is that the Chief of the Labor Department is Enrique Volta Gaona, a militant member of the Colorado Party and the sponsor of a new labor organization called Organizacion Republicana Obrera (ORO).
3. ORO was founded in the latter part of 1946 primarily for the purpose of combatting Febrerista and Communist influence in the labor unions. It is now the only affiliation of labor unions existing in Paraguay. However, to become a member of one of the affiliated unions it is necessary to establish proof of membership in the Colorado Party. As it is a party organization, it does not have a broad membership among the ranks of labor.
4. There has been a sharp drop in the number of strikes in the first six months of 1947, as compared with the last six months of 1946. The decrease in the wave of labor unrest during this year is attributed by source to the elimination of COP from the field of organized labor and the present lack of civil liberties in the country. COP, being Communist-controlled, was essentially interested in agitating and creating strife in the labor movement. Then, too, COP and the Communists furnished many of the labor leaders of the country, all of whom are now in jail, in hiding, or have fled the country. Labor does not dare to strike today because of the absence of the right to a writ of habeas corpus, engendered by the strong counter measures taken by the government against the plots and outbreaks of violence in the country.

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NO CHANGE in Class

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